

The Last Word in Tea Gowns

The Robe Intime in All Its Fascination, and the Silk Rest Robe Now Hold Paris in Their Power



The Cape of the Day. Rose Colored Satin Velours Draped in Sunburst Style.

LADY DUFF-GORDON, the famous "Lucile" of London, and foremost creator of fashions in the world, writes each week the fashion article for this newspaper, presenting all that is newest and best in styles for well-dressed women.

Lady Duff-Gordon's Paris establishment brings her into close touch with that centre of fashion.

By Lady Duff-Gordon.

IS there anything more fascinating, more enticing and more pocket-book-breaking than the feminine fripperies of the moment: the tea robes, the lingerie and what not? Verily I think not. I wonder if there lives a civilized woman whose soul fails to respond when she sees such delectable beauties as the lady of fashion wears in her hours of ease.

Oh, the lure of clothes! Imagine, if you please, the soul thrills of a woman who has never had any such lovely, intimate clothes as I am going to write you about, when she beholds them for the first time. And especially when she sees them worn by some beautifully feminine person!

The magnificence of Niagara may over-awe the imagination, may make a woman speechless with wonder, but this feeling is as nothing compared with that which surges over a woman who finds herself in a "beauty shop" with unlimited sums of money at her disposal!

Balzac has said that a woman is most feminine when she is at her dress-makers. I agree, yet disagree with that not-to-be-approached master of words. Woman is utterly feminine when considering clothes, whether it be at her dressmaker or in her home, but she is superfeminine when shopping for frillies to adorn her own dainty person. I am minded here to say that daintiness is a feminine characteristic. The man who is avowedly dainty in his habits we call effeminate, and justly so. I believe firmly that daintiness is inherent in every woman. She may through poverty, or disaster, lose the power to preserve it, but the desire for it is always there, under the skin. It is the spirit of daintiness, of fastidiousness, and not a sense of virtue which keeps most women moral.

No, I am not getting away from my subject, just simplifying it a little. I do not like to be kept running along like a tram-car on a single track. I like to scatter myself and make my letters cover as much ground as your editor will permit. For instance, before going on to talk tea gowns and boudoir caps I should like to put you thoroughly in the spirit to enjoy them! Therefore I shall tell you about some marvelous aromatic baths which one of our most charming actresses told me of the other day. She confided to me that she never, oh, never! put on one of her "rest gowns" without having first plunged into a tub filled with aromatic water. I give you here her very special pet formula: 200 grammes each of dried thyme, rosemary, mallows and Linden, steeped in eight quarts of boiling water for one half hour,



The Robe of the Heart. Tea Gown of Flesh Colored Charmeuse, White Net and Valenciennes Lace.

while this is steeping dissolve 350 grammes of bicarbonate of soda; add this to the bath.

"After this," my charming friend said, "I slip into my loveliest, flimsiest under things, and my most fetching over dress, and really I am ready to conquer the world."

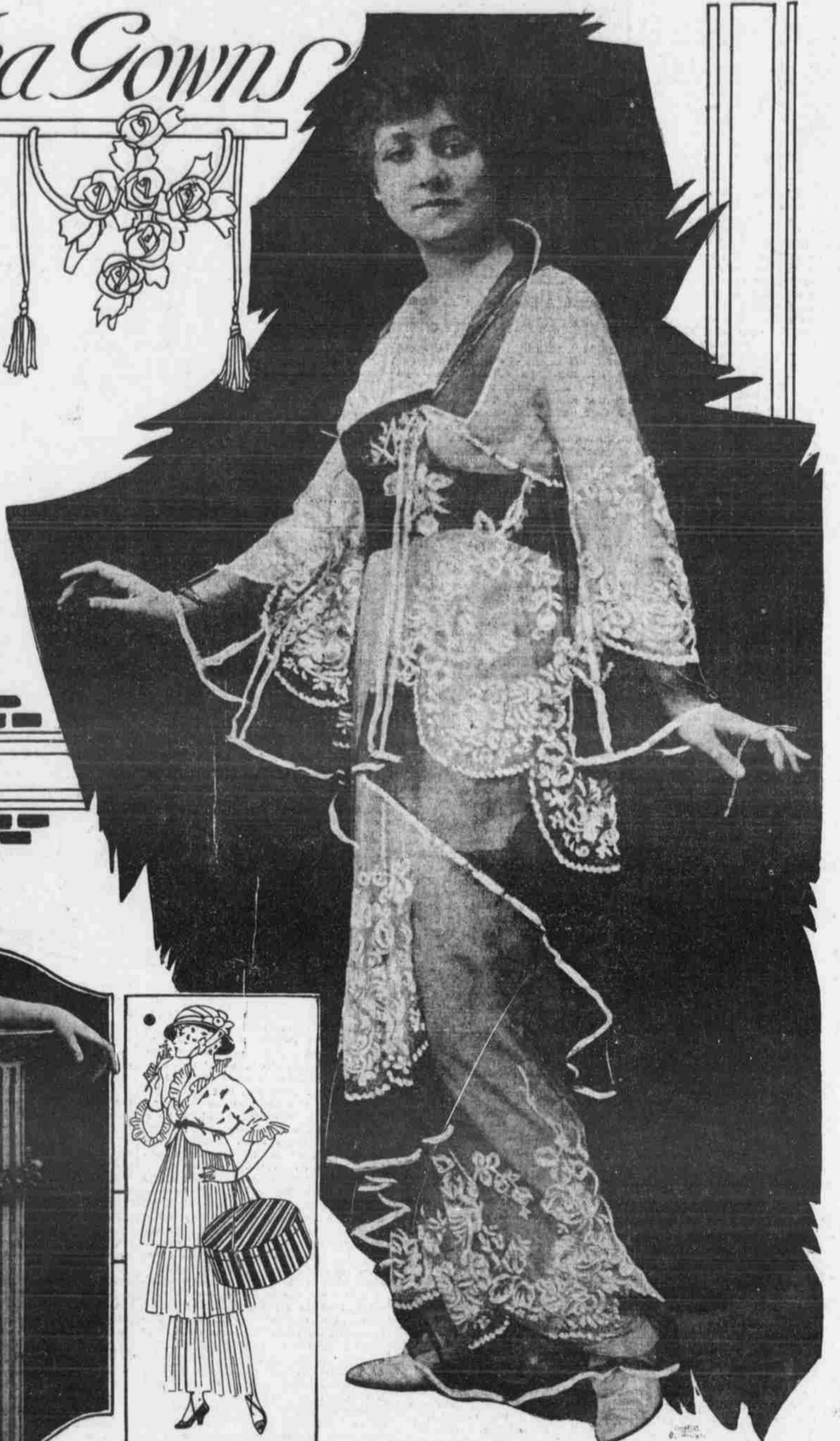
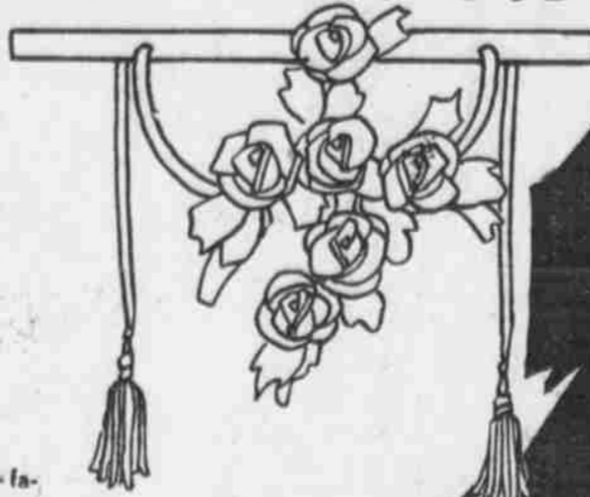
And of her conquering ability and her intense feminine charm I am well able to speak! She has the world of Paris at her feet, not only because of her talent but because of her gracious and all-pervading femininity. And she would not be nearly so feminine if she did not wear these wonderful tea gowns and rest robes, to say nothing of the under things. Some day I shall ask your editor to let me write of the under things of Paris. Ah, that would be a theme far more interesting than the underworld.

The three photographs I am sending you this week show a wide range of thought, if not of style. The gown intime, with its rare lace flouncings, is one of the most fetching of Mile.

D's tea gowns. The foundation is several layers of fresh colored chiffon, on which are draped flouncings of striking black maline lace. The whole affair wraps about the slender uncorseted figure of the wearer in the most graceful manner imaginable.

The "Robe of the Heart" is just as interesting as the intime gown. It has the waistline outlined with a wreath of tiny roses and forget-me-nots, and the whole thing seems to be made of a series of white net ruffles, sharply scalloped. Is it not bewitching?

The cape of the day is, strictly speaking, not a tea gown, but this original little person sometimes wears it over a slip of lace and airy frills. As it is a luscious rose color it can be thus worn with the most devastating effect on the beholder. In this picture the model is wearing a severe little cap. But close your eyes and imagine a becoming cap of lace and use buds perched on the girlish head and you can readily understand why Mile D— changes its purpose quite often.



"The Gown Intime." Tea Gown of Flesh Colored Chiffon and Black Maline Lace.



Very Odd Things That "Bring Luck"

THE modern woman who delights to juggle a bunch of miscellaneous charms at her wrist and who is on the lookout for fresh ideas will learn with satisfaction of a collection which includes every form of luck-emblem the world has known.

This collection, at a moment when every motor car has its mascot and every watch chain its fetish, has a curious or rather ironical significance, and illustrates how little human nature has really changed and how devoutly men and women of all times have believed in their individual "destiny" and guarded it against malign influences.

It is included in the Historical Medical Museum, London, and comprises Egyptian, Roman, Arabic, African, Chinese, Japanese and European pieces, ancient and modern.

The Egyptian charms include several small examples of that most famous and potent of all, the "Ankh," or key of life, which in Egyptian pictures is often seen in the hands of divine personages. But by far the comestest is that known as the "uschat." To ward off the prevalent ophthalmia and other eye affections the ancient Egyptians used to trace on the lower eyelid a magical scroll-shaped pattern with powdered antimony, and the model of an eye so decorated was also worn as a charm. There are also found ear-shaped charms against deafness, human teeth carved like Sphinxes. Another very rare figure represents a man holding his hand to his face as if in pain. It is believed that this charm is the only one of its kind in existence.

The Roman collection dates back to about the time of Christ. The exhibits are made of copper-bronze, and are of the usual shapes. A very interesting figure, concerning the nature of which little is known, represents a small horse, while another shows a shark's tooth embedded in a clasp of metal. These are rather bigger and more clumsy than the Egyptian ones and much less desirable as ornaments.

Beside the Roman exhibits are early and late pieces from West and Central Africa, the Congo and Arabia. Among these is a necklace labelled "Kubli," or "Kill Sixty," which was no doubt worn by a warrior. There are also several wooden crocodiles with flat, smooth backs. It is said that these were used by doctors when puzzling out a difficult case. The doctor rubbed the crocodile's back and the animal told him what was wrong.

The modern collection is even more interesting than the ancient. It is a revelation in present-day superstitions, every item of it having been recovered from the original owners within the last few years.

The first piece is a small stone, like a human foot, carried about by a Frenchman, who believed that it cured his gout and who parted with it very reluctantly. In the next case is a piece of amber shaped like a heart and used to ward off rheumatism until three years ago. A "rheumatism potato" from Norfolk lies beside it. Near these are two cards, each bearing a pair of mole's feet, which in Norfolk are still carried about as a toothache cure.

Other curious items of the same character are a small bone from the ankle used to ward off cramp by the East Country people; a piece of vervain root, which is supposed to be a protection against witchcraft, and is still in request in country districts for this purpose; a roll of selkirk obtained from a Suffolk woman, who carried it to prevent cramp, and a fossil sea urchin from a cottage which it protected against the devil for many years.

The sheep's heart stuck full of pins and nails, which was obtained in South Devon, is especially interesting, as this was used to break the spell cast by a black witch upon a herd of cattle. Beside it lies a strand of red silk taken from the neck of a Norfolk child, who was troubled with bleeding from the nose and wore this charm as a preventive.

The island of Mull has yielded an example of a very ancient and well-known spell to charm away toothache. Here it is with all its eccentricities of spelling and grammar: "In the name of the Lord God. Peter sat on a marble stone weeping. Christ came by and asked 'What aillth thee Peter?' Peter said 'O Lord God my teeth doth itchie.' Christ said, 'Arise Peter and be whole and not only thou but all them that carries these lined for, My Name's sake shall never have toothach.'"

The script ends with the laconic statement: "Made for Mary McLeod."

Some of the charms seem to have had no particular significance, and were just worn "for luck," but it seems pretty certain that there are many persons who carry such astonishing odds and ends about with them religiously, and would be quite unhappy without them.